



Hello Hamilton County

May 2011

E-News for Hamilton County citizens and employees

Quote of the month:

"If there is hope in the future, there is power in the present."

~John Maxwell

Banks High Occupancy Vehicle/Rideshare Agreement Provides Discounted Parking for Carpoolers

The Hamilton County Commissioners voted unanimously on April 6 to approve an agreement that provides discounted parking for commuters who carpool.

Thanks to funding provided by the Ohio Kentucky Indiana Regional Council of Governments (OKI), subsidized, preferred parking for up to 177 commuter vehicles at the Banks Transit Facility will be available. Carpoolers will pay \$25 monthly per vehicle, rather than \$100 monthly.

According to Mark Policinski, Executive Director of OKI, the High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Parking Program is the first of its kind in the nation. "This dovetails with the ride share program which we've had in place for 30 years," said Policinski.

The goal of the HOV Parking Program is to maximize the benefit of the public investment made at the Banks and to more fully utilize the Banks Transit Facility for public transportation. The HOV Program is envisioned to play an expanded role in the Central Riverfront of the Cincinnati area, serving a growing commuter market.

"This is a major project for the region," said



Commissioner Todd Portune. "It promotes carpooling, a reduction of traffic on the highways, and supports investments made in the Cincinnati Riverfront and the Banks." Commissioner Portune cited the extraordinary savings on parking and called the project a great collaboration.

"Any of the most successful projects involve regional collaboration. OKI stands for partnerships," said Commissioner Hartmann as he thanked OKI for its leadership.

Those interested in using the HOV Parking Program would complete paperwork to register, by visiting www.parking.com or in person at the Central Riverfront Garage office located in the Central Riverfront Garage P-1 level at 99 East 2nd Street. Once registered, HOV Parking Program participants would have a hangtag that identifies them as HOV Program participants. They may enter the garage between 6 a.m. and 10 a.m., Monday—Friday, using a specific entrance. As they enter, a cashier will verify that at least three people are in the vehicle. If so, the driver can proceed to one of the preferred HOV parking spaces.

For more information, please visit:
www.oki.org/commuter/rideshare.html



Severe Weather Season Involves More than Sirens

Guest Column: Commissioner Todd Portune

Recent media coverage about tornado season and the level of preparedness in Hamilton and other counties in the region serves as a good starting point to introduce area residents about the dangers of severe weather; about what public resources are available to warn in advance and to assist when it hits; and to encourage citizens to take personal responsibility to become prepared individually and on behalf of your immediate families if a weather disaster strikes close to home.

In Hamilton County, after years of unfortunate political opposition, we have finally been able to upgrade our emergency warning system. Today, we have acquired all of the equipment needed to provide for full 100% coverage of our outdoor siren system, complete with battery backup to ensure a functional system exists when the power goes out. Full implementation of the upgraded outdoor system will be completed by the Fall of this year.

That alone, however, does not end the upgrades and safety improvements that Hamilton County Emergency Management has made. The county EMA also implemented an audible, voice-messaging system [sometimes referred to as "Reverse 911"] that communicates a specific message to citizens about the pending emergency that can be as broad as a county-wide message about a certain event, to as specific as warning an individual neighborhood about a flash flood threat or an amber alert. Together these system enhancements provide full 100% coverage to warn and to communicate needed information during a period of an emergency.

Cell phone users and other non-traditional land line callers may register to receive the Reverse 911 messages by signing up to receive the signal online at www.hamiltoncountyohioema.org and hit the link to the "**citizen emergency notification system**". Whatever you do remember that the warnings are only the first part of notification. Citizens should immediately tune in to radio or television for more detailed information once the warning is received and everyone is encouraged to buy a weather-alert radio.

Emergency Management has enhanced the capability of the region's emergency response network through a variety of improvements, including the state of the art Regional Operations Center (ROC) that was constructed in partnership between Hamilton County and the City of Cincinnati and by acquiring over \$50 Million in much needed emergency response equipment since 2003. Beyond that we have developed new collaborative initiatives that greatly expand the eyes and ears of emergency management during an actual emergency to better ensure that people with special needs; our seniors and others will have feet on the ground at the ROC during an emergency. We have partnered with Red Cross in identifying shelters in advance of an actual emergency that can be opened when and where needed. And the breadth of preparedness has even included partnering with the county Recycling and Solid Waste Management District to assist local communities in dealing with the aftermath and necessary clean up of waste and debris following a weather event.

The final piece of the puzzle involves individual preparedness. Even under the best of circumstances with the greatest amount of advance work and preparation by public officials individuals must still take responsibility for themselves and others. The Red Cross and others, including County EMA, have mounted campaigns over the years to encourage people to prepare an emergency box of needed goods, foodstuffs, flashlights, batteries, water, blankets, medicines/first aid equipment and other life saving and life sustaining items. At a minimum three days of product for every member of your immediate household should be stockpiled and saved in an easy to get to location. At best, two or more weeks worth of product should be stored away. Go to www.hamiltoncountyohioema.org for links to what you should have on hand to be prepared.

The onset of severe weather season serves as a reminder to all of us that we each have a responsibility to our families and ourselves to do as much as we can to prepare for our immediate needs during a period of emergency. By taking those basic precautions for ourselves, and by being willing to also look in on and out for the needs of our neighbors, the advance preparations by public agencies will be able to make sure that basic needs are met and services provided. As citizens we each have a duty to do as much.

Respectfully yours,
Todd Portune
Hamilton County Commissioner
Chairman, Hamilton County
Emergency Management Agency
Executive Committee



Project Gain Success Story: Employee's Persistence Saves Thousands of Dollars



The Board of County Commissioners recognized Sheriff's Employee Steven Overberg for his Successful Project Gain Program.

Hamilton County saved \$79,158 at the end of 2010 when Steven Overberg, a Computer Programmer Analyst in the Information Systems Section of the Hamilton County Sheriff's Department went above and beyond his normal scope of duties to save Hamilton County money.

For the past several years, the Sheriff's Department has needed to replace several computer servers. These servers are the backbone to the Sheriff's information processing and storage. The servers had far exceeded the normal service life and were becoming increasingly expensive, if available at all. A crash of any one of these servers would cause major disruption of normal operations including significant loss of service to the public. In 2010, the budget request for replacement of these items did not make it into the final approved budget. However, in mid October, the Sheriff's

Information Systems section was notified that it was possible that year end funds may be available to purchase some of the equipment. The equipment would have to be encumbered by Nov. 19th which was only 4 weeks away. Due to the design and technical requirements of the needed servers, the allotted time frame seemed almost impossible to meet.

The task was assigned to Steven Overberg. He immediately began analyzing and designing a new system and network configuration. He requested price quotes from several vendors and learned the cost would exceed any possible amount available from the year-end funding, especially with the need to award bids before the November deadline. This meant he had to focus on dealing with vendors who were certified under the State Contract provisions of Government purchasing.

Overberg learned that the projected cost of the project would be well over \$200,000 and would qualify under a program that he found with Hewlett Packard (HP) called the "BIG DEAL" program. This program allows the purchase of items at less than the State Contract price of \$264,270. Steven contacted the Purchasing Department regarding the BIG DEAL concept. Purchasing was not aware of this program, and they contacted the Prosecutor's Office about it. Steven was told the County could not participate in the HP lower pricing. Thus, they would have to pay the higher State Contract price.

Steven was persistent. He got a copy of the BIG DEAL policy from HP and learned that several states had banded together to form purchasing groups. Two of the groups (National Association of State Procurement Officials and Western States Contracting Alliance) were recognized by HP.

Continued, p. 4.



Continued from p. 3

He also discovered the State of Ohio is a member of these groups. Armed with knowledge, he again approached the Purchasing Department who verified Overberg's information and approved the use of the HP BIG DEAL pricing.

Overberg worked diligently with a team from HP to develop the exact specifications needed for the project. They got the final product expedited through the HP approval process using the group purchasing quote of \$206,287, plus the BIG DEAL dis-

count. The final written quote was obtained prior to the November 19 deadline, and was for just \$185,112. The savings between the State of Ohio contract and the final quote from HP was \$79,158.

Through Overberg's determination, the County is now aware of HP's BIG DEAL pricing program and the National Association Of State Procurement Officials and Western States Contracting Alliance, which are all available to the County on an ongoing basis. These programs saved money on this purchase and will also benefit the County for future

purchases.

Overberg contributed to the efficient operation of Hamilton County government, and went above and beyond his normal scope of duties, providing a cost savings for Hamilton County. Overberg was awarded \$2,000 for this Project Gain Program.

For more information about Hamilton County's Project Gain program, please visit [this link](#).

Hamilton County Commissioners Pilot a New Social Media Presence

The Hamilton County Board of Commissioners implemented a new social media program in April, using Facebook and Twitter to communicate with County residents. The goal of the program is to inform, connect and engage citizens with their County government.

"Utilization of social media technology will enable the County to improve awareness and accessibility to information about the services we provide with their tax dollars," said Commission President Greg Hartmann. "I look forward to using these new tools to engage directly with those we serve while providing a greater level of transparency to County government."

The Commissioners have used Facebook and Twitter to communicate information about County services and events, promote helpful links to County websites and spotlight other County agencies using social media.



In just a few weeks, the Facebook page has attracted almost 150 people who "like" the page, so they can see the Commissioners' updates on their news feeds. If you try to find it on Facebook, type in "Hamilton County, Ohio" and look for the page with the Hamilton County seal, as pictured on the left.

The pilot program will run through May 31 using a Facebook page and Twitter account: @HamiltonCntyOH.

The new social media program is intended to be made permanent, but Commissioners wish to take the opportunity to review ideas to improve or enhance the program after several weeks in use.

Hamilton County joins peer counties in Ohio that also utilize social media, including Franklin County (Columbus), Cuyahoga County (Cleveland) and Montgomery County (Dayton).



Hamilton County Restaurants Do Something Great for the Environment!

Many local Hamilton County restaurants and bars are doing something great for the environment, while reducing their costs. And it's thanks to an assist from the Hamilton County Department of Environmental Services' Solid Waste District's (District's) Bar and Restaurant Recycling Program.

Implemented in November 2010, the Bar and Restaurant Recycling Program has already engaged many local businesses in recycling. Successes include:

[The Comet](#) in Northside began recycling, and within only three months, the establishment recycled more than 26,000 beer and liquor bottles. The Comet has enjoyed a savings of \$30 monthly since the recycling program began.

"Aside from space limitations, there is no good reason why this can't be implemented throughout the city," notes owner Dave Cunningham. He views it as win-win-win for bar owners, patrons and the environment.

[Mac's Pizza Pub](#) began recycling in 2010. After implementing recycling they were able to reduce their trash pickup from 5 times per week to 2 times per week.

"This reduction constituted a significant savings. We still have 2 cardboard and one co-mingled pick-ups per week, so the frequency of pickups is the same, but the recycled items are less expensive to have hauled away than the trash," says owner Mac Ryan.

The District's program provides:

- Technical assistance in getting the program started
- Coordination of recycling services with waste haulers
- Indoor collection containers
- Education for employees and customers
- A decal promoting that your business recycles

Implementing or improving recycling programs in restaurants and bars is not only good for the environment, but it can also help cut trash costs, benefit the local economy, and conserve valuable resources.

[Many popular businesses](#)

have already begun recycling, and more join in every month! In March 2011, six establishments jumped on board. They include:

- Tom + Chee
- Lunar Lounge
- Launch
- Scene Ultra Lounge
- Gabby's Café
- Heid's Bowling Lanes.

In April, the program welcomed:

- Salem Gardens
- Mainstay Rock Bar
- Great American Ball Park
- Champions Grille
- Roxy's Restaurant and Lounge
- Vinoklet Winery and Restaurant.



A Mac's Pizza Pub
Bartender
Recycles a bottle.

Please pass this news along to your favorite Hamilton County bar or restaurant! If you're a bar or restaurant owner who is interested in the program, please contact the Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District to learn more or to set up a meeting with a recycling specialist.

To learn more:

Call 946-7766

or email getnoticed@hamilton-co.org.

Or visit

www.HamiltonCountyRecycles.org





Hamilton County Developmental Disabilities Services Superintendent Honored for Lifetime Service to People with Disabilities



Cheryl Phipps, Hamilton County DDS' Superintendent, receives the Lifetime Achievement Award from the Ohio Provider Resource Association.

The Superintendent of Hamilton County's Board of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS), Cheryl Phipps, recently received a lifetime achievement award from the Ohio Provider Resource Association (OPRA.)

"In her 40-year-plus career, Cheryl Phipps has been a champion for excellence in services for people with disabilities," said Mark Davis, OPRA President. She is held in the highest esteem by people in the disabilities community."

As Superintendent of Hamilton County DD Services for the past 11 years, Phipps' many accomplishments have been driven by her leadership locally and around the state in implementing the philosophy of self determination as the guiding force of services for people with disabilities.

Phipps earned a bachelor's degree in biology and sociology from Western Kentucky University and a master's degree in education from the University of Kentucky. She also earned a juris doctorate later in her career from Capital University.

Positions she has held during her career include:

- Workshop Director and Assistant Superintendent with the Franklin County Board of DD in Columbus, Ohio;

- Director of Residential Services with the Association for the Developmentally Disabled in Columbus;
- Director of STAR Center in Cincinnati (now Easter Seals Work Resource Center);
- Supervisor with the Kentucky Bureau of Rehabilitation Services.

Phipps has been honored by other organizations, too, including:

- United Cerebral Palsy of Greater Cincinnati;
- Ohio Association of County Boards of DD;
- Ohio Developmental Disabilities Council,
- Ohio Department of DD,
- The ARC of Ohio,
- Southwest Ohio Rehabilitation Association,
- Ohio Self Determination Association,
- Professional Association for Citizens with Mental Retardation,
- Licking County's YWCA, Rotary Club, and United Way.

Phipps has also served in various leadership roles in these organizations and others.

For more information about Hamilton County DDS, visit the agency's web site at www.hamiltondds.org.



Container Loan Program Makes Any Event Earth Friendly



Have you ever noticed how much trash ends up on the ground after big events like football games, festivals, concerts or parades? Frequently, garbage cans will be scarce or overflowing, and recycling containers are nowhere to be found. However, it's simple and free to receive as many recycling containers as necessary, thanks to Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District's (District) container loan program.

Through this program, the District provides highly visible and portable containers as well as plastic liners. In 2010, recycling containers were used for 85 events and provided 241,588 people with access to recycling. Recyclable items include plastic bottles and jugs (removable lids), glass bottles and jars (removable lids), and aluminum, tin and steel cans.

Two styles of recycling containers are available. The bottle-shaped containers (pictured right) are especially noticeable and great for collecting plastic, glass bottles and metal cans. However, they require a truck or van to transport. The "Clear Tainers" (pictured left) are more easily transported, but are not suitable for collecting glass, since broken glass will rip the bag.

Once you have your containers, there are several measures to take to ensure that your program is as productive as possible. To prevent confusion and contamination of recyclable containers, place the recycling containers right beside trash cans. Make sure to provide both garbage and recycling containers at all major food areas and exits. It is also helpful to recruit volunteers to monitor the containers and remove items that do not belong. Event coordinators are responsible for collecting and recycling materials and are required to sign a contract agreeing to assume financial responsibility for missing containers. We'll provide the containers, clear plastic liners and technical assistance.

To request your containers, contact Cher Mohring at 513-946-7737 or cher.mohring@hamilton-co.org. For more information about recycling in your community and surrounding areas, visit hamiltoncountyrecycles.org.



Hamilton County Board of Elections Pilots New ePoll Book Technology



A poll worker in Norwood uses the ePoll book as part of a pilot test during the May 3rd Primary/Special Election.

Voters and poll workers in selected precincts in Norwood and Elmwood Place had the first opportunity to test the latest technology for processing voters in the May 3rd Primary/Special Election.

A method of “checking” a voter’s registration record for voting on Election Day, using an electronic (ePoll Book), was used. This method replaces the need for a paper Signature Poll Book. The pilot test employed the Hart InterCivic ePollBook equipment. Hart is the company that provided Hamilton County’s eScan & eSlate voting equipment.

“The ePoll Book is a secure and cost effective way to help poll workers quickly and accurately locate a voter, issue the ballot and update the voter’s record,” said Board of Elections Director

Sally Krisel. “In automating this manual process, the ePollBook improves voter check-in speed while reducing paperwork and errors.”

“We were very pleased to have the opportunity to try the ePoll Book and will look for other solutions to make the voting experience in Hamilton County smooth and efficient,” said Amy Searcy, Board of Elections Deputy Director.

“Our staff, poll workers and the voters had very positive comments about our test of the ePollBook for the May Primary/Special Election,” said Krisel. “They were easy to set up, use and close down. We are looking into testing another electronic poll book in our small August 2011 Special Election and will report a summary of our field observations to our board and the County Commissioners.”



Turn the Key, Be Idle Free!

The flick of your fingers. That's about all the effort it takes to turn off or to start a car. Turning the ignition in your vehicle is probably one of the simplest tasks you perform all day. However, many people tend to believe that idling (leaving a car's engine running when it's parked or not in use) is somehow more convenient than turning that key. Not only is it less convenient, it's much more harmful; idling negatively affects our wallets, health and our air by creating smog and wasting gasoline.

Some drivers think that it is more efficient to leave the car running, rather than turning it off and restarting the engine. If you're already feeling the pain at the pump, you know it's more important than ever to use gas wisely and conservatively. When a car is left idling, it receives the worst mileage possible—0 miles per gallon! Contrary to popular belief, idling for more than 30 seconds actually uses more gasoline than turning off the engine and restarting it. Aside from wasting precious gasoline, idling also releases unnecessary pollutants into our air and can negatively affect our cars.

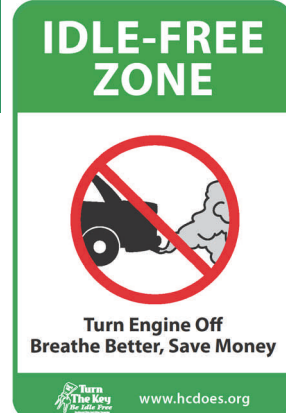
The Hamilton County Air Quality Management Division offers "Idle-Free Zone" signs that may be placed throughout communities to remind residents to turn the

key. Places such as school drop-off/pick-up areas for students, athletic fields or parking lots are a few especially prime locations for anti-idling signs.

Anti-idling signs like the one pictured here serve as a friendly reminder to community members to stop idling. Posting anti-idling signs like the one pictured above can help improve outdoor air quality, ultimately reducing asthma-related symptoms, saving residents fuel and reducing the amount of harmful chemicals released into our air.

To become part of the Southwest Ohio Anti-Idling campaign, contact Kristy Kim at 513-946-7754 or Kristy.kim@hamilton-co.org.

You'll receive an anti-idling kit complete with educational brochures, anti-idling pledge cards and incentives. For more information about anti-idling and air quality, please visit hcdoes.org.



2011 Compost Bin and Rain Barrel Sale

The Hamilton County Recycling and Solid Waste District is pleased to welcome in spring this year with its annual backyard compost bin and rain barrel sale. The event will feature FreeGarden™ compost bins and rain barrels available for sale to Hamilton County residents only on a first come, first served basis.

Saturday, May 14, 2011

9 a.m.—2 p.m.

Two locations: Village Crossings, 10400 Reading Rd., Evendale, OH 45241
(Corner of Reading Rd. and Glendale-Milford Rd.)

And

Green Township Administration Complex
6303 Harrison Ave., Cincinnati, OH 45247 (1 mile south of I-74).

Compost bins will be sold at the discounted price of \$35, and rain barrels will be available for \$50.

Cash, checks, Visa, MasterCard or Discover are accepted, while supplies last.

Quantities are limited! Products require no difficult assembly and can fit in most cars for easy transport.

For more information, please call the Hamilton County Compost Hotline at 513-946-7755 or visit www.hamiltoncountyrecycles.org.



Hamilton County Law Library Provides Educational Events for Legal Professionals and Others

The Hamilton County Law Library regularly provides educational events on legal issues. Seminars are provided for two different groups: legal professionals and every day citizens. The Law Library has two educational seminars available in May.

For Citizens who are not legal professionals, this seminar is free and open to the public:

You and the Legal System: Estate Planning **Speaker: Katrina Z. Farley, Esq.**

Friday, May 20, 2011

12 noon—1 p.m.

Hamilton County Law Library

Hamilton County Courthouse,

1000 Main Street, 6th Floor

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Ms. Farley will cover topics including wills, powers of attorney, health care powers of attorney, living wills, and trusts and will answer questions.

Please call 513-946-5300 to reserve a seat.

This program is brought to you as a public service by the Hamilton County Law Library in conjunction with the Cincinnati Bar Association's Lawyer Referral Service.

For legal professionals only, the following seminar is offered:

Prenuptial Basics CLE **Speaker: Cathy R. Cook, Esq.**

Friday, May 27, 2011

1 p.m.—2 p.m.

Hamilton County Law Library

Hamilton County Courthouse

1000 Main Street, 6th Floor

Cincinnati, Ohio 45202

Just in time for wedding season, this presentation will cover the basics of drafting prenuptial agreements. Attorney Cathy R. Cook will discuss when they can be used, who should have a prenup, what issues should be spelled out, and what makes them vulnerable to attack.

Approved for 1.0 hour of general Ohio and Kentucky CLE credit.

Free to law library subscribers and county officials, \$50 for nonsubscribers.

Please call 513-946-5300 to reserve a seat.



Sustainable Hamilton County Reinventing Our Communities

Let's Make It Happen



ROUND TABLE SERIES 2011

Consider this: During a presentation about resources available to communities to improve the physical environment making it easier for people to walk, Stacy Wegley from Hamilton County Public Health, said the Safe Routes to School program is greatly underutilized, and funding is "left at the table." Let's find out why, and what can we do to tap into these resources.

Join representatives from Colerain Twp, Anderson Twp, Madeira, Fairfax and Wyoming as they share their lessons learned from the program, the application process, and tips they picked up along the way that may be useful to your community.

Experiences With The Safe Routes to School Program in Hamilton County Communities—Round Table

When: Wednesday, May 11, 2011

Time: 11:30 am—1:00 pm

Where: Wyoming Civic Center—1 Worthington Avenue at Springfield Pike—
Wyoming OH 45215

Cost: FREE, however registration is required

RSVP: <http://www.hamilton-co.org/hcrpc/shc/>

Who should attend: Appointed and elected officials, and staff from Hamilton County jurisdictions; School District Superintendents, school principals; Planners; and any other individuals and organizations involved in community planning and development.

More information: Catalina Landivar, AICP catalina.landivar@hamilton-co.org 513-946-4455

Note: Staff from ODOT, OKI, YMCA, and Public Health will be at hand for any questions about the program and institutional resources available to you for this program

Program Sponsors:





Hamilton County Celebrates Public Service Recognition Week



During the first week in May, Hamilton County joined other government entities in honoring public employees. The Board of County Commissioners expressed gratitude to all county employees and recognized seven Employee of the Year award recipients on April 27. On May 5, the Board recognized the same employees during the Greater Cincinnati Public Service Recognition event on Fountain Square. Many Hamilton County organizations provided informational exhibits and displays during the May 5th event, which highlighted their organizations' services.

You can read all about the employees of the year on the next several pages.

County Hero Award: Deputy Jared Ruther Hamilton County Sheriff's Office

Deputy Jared Ruther is a Hamilton County Sheriff's Patrol Officer who provided a professional response to a potentially dangerous situation, earning him the County Hero Award.

On February 23, 2010, Officer Ruther responded to a bomb threat at R. B. Tool and Manufacturing Company, located in Colerain Township. He received information that a suspect walked into the business and threatened to blow up the place. Officer Ruther was informed that the suspect possessed an unknown type of device.

When he arrived on the scene, Deputy Ruther noticed that the Beckmann Adult Center was located right next door. Knowing that the center works with mentally challenged individuals, Deputy Ruther contacted the center and was able to discern that the suspect was likely one of their members. Deputy Ruther was able to confirm this. He checked and found that the suspect did not have any weapons or devices and was able to take the suspect back to the Beckmann Adult Center.

Thanks to Deputy Ruther's calm assessment of the problem, his willingness to keep an open mind in a potentially dangerous situation, the situation was brought to a safe and reasonable solution.



Sheriff Si Leis (pictured center) joined Commissioners in commending Deputy Jared Ruther (pictured left).



Leadership Award: Amy Story Job and Family Services

As Section Chief of Job and Family Services' Child Care division, Amy Story leads with grace and professionalism. The Child Care division has faced challenging situations over the past year. Some child care providers have unionized, a major transition occurred when the way child care payments are made shifted from a local to a state process, and the child care system itself will undergo a major transformation this June. After layoffs, Amy helped design a case bank system to better distribute the workload, and she invited employees to suggest ideas about what processes would work best for them. In the midst of all of these changes, with Amy's leadership, Hamilton County Child Care is perceived as a leader in rolling out efficient child care practices when changes are implemented by the State.



Amy's employees commend her strong leadership skills. They say that she empowers employees, asks staff to share ideas regarding efficiency in the Child Care division, shares information, and encourages employees to ask questions. Amy is an outstanding leader, yet works side by side with employees to handle paperwork, assist customers, and communicate with providers as needed. In addition, Amy leads by example.

Extra Mile Award: Melissa Stokley Job and Family Services

As a Consumer Specialist for Hamilton County Job and Family Services' Child Care division, Melissa Stokley has earned a reputation for taking the initiative to make things better and for going the extra mile to ensure work is done in a timely, efficient manner.

When Melissa saw an issue in which an outdated system in Child Care meant that hours for child care vouchers were frequently wrong when children had a day off school, Melissa single-handedly updated the system so the computer would automatically allot the correct hours. This saved consumers, day care providers, and staff from devoting extra hours to correcting errors caused by the system.



Melissa frequently assists her co-workers. When co-workers are absent, Melissa volunteers to help with the workload. She has willingly taken on extra duties. And when a co-worker was nervous about using JFS' online chat process, Melissa walked the co-worker through the process step by step. If Melissa hears co-workers share their frustrations about work-related situations, Melissa asks the co-workers to make things better by sharing their concerns with a manager or by working directly with those involved to address the situation.



Administrative/Clerical Support Award: Lisa Hodapp, Treasurer's Office

As a Clerk II in the Data and Document Processing Department of the Treasurer's Office, Lisa Hodapp is consistently outstanding. Lisa provides courteous, professional service to everyone when carrying out her regular duties. Her attention to detail is noteworthy. Lisa takes extra care to update records based on information captured on conveyance forms and returned tax bills, so the office has the most current, accurate information on file.

And because Lisa has worked in three different areas of the Treasurer's Office, she has the knowledge and understanding necessary to support others with their work, too. Lisa notices needs and strives to make sure they are met, without being asked. Her initiative, professionalism, and diligence make a positive difference for the Treasurer's Office.



Lisa Hodapp, Treasurer Robert A. Goering, Commissioner Portune, and Commissioner Monzel.

Customer Service Excellence Award: David Troup Board of Developmental Disabilities Services

During David Troup's 28 year career with Hamilton County's Board of Developmental Disabilities Services (DDS), he has exceeded agency expectations regarding customer service. This Senior Facilitator's commitment to those he serves has had an amazing impact on their lives.

David is responsive to his customers, returning all calls and responding to requests for help and information as quickly as possible. He believes that the more he works in person with his customers, the fewer issues and miscommunications will occur. Although his caseload is large, Dave meets with over 70% of those he serves every single month. He says his top priority in 2011 is, "to continue to build relationships and help people achieve what matters most to them."

Dave is the founder of the Special Olympics Unified Softball League. He commits countless hours annually to ensure its success. He also coaches Special Olympics basketball, organizes and provides rides to the Red's Kid Glove Game annually, and can be found on any given day transporting individuals that use DDS' services to miscellaneous Special Olympics events. Dave has connected countless numbers of individuals with developmental disabilities to the joy of competitive sports. Dave also has taken those he serves to community events, concerts, Reds games, UC sporting events, and to the Vineyard Church's prom. He has even devoted time on weekends helping people clean their apartments so they would not need to depend on paid agency support.

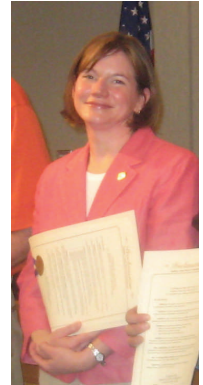
Dave demonstrates what customer service is all about. He gives beyond expectations and is a role model for all public servants.





Innovation Award: Laura Maus Hamilton County Human Resources

Laura Maus, Senior HRD Manager/Juvenile Court HR Director, supports innovation in Hamilton County government. When asked to offer a training class on efficiency, Laura recommended a class on innovation instead. She explained that innovation incorporates doing business more efficiently, but also promotes thinking of and implementing ideas to add value. Over 1,600 employees attended the "Hamilton County Innovates" course. In the course, the class participants learned strategies for innovation and came up with great ideas right in the classroom. Laura shared those ideas with top administrators to consider for implementation. The "Hamilton County Innovates" curriculum received a NACo Achievement Award and serves as a model for other public entities.



In classes and through her work publishing the "Hello Hamilton County" newsletter, Laura promotes use of the Board of County Commissioner's "Project Gain" and "Fresh Ideas" innovation programs. Laura doesn't just promote the programs, though. She participates in them, too. Laura supported her team in submitting a successful Project Gain program that saves over \$10,000 annually. And she submitted a suggestion through the Fresh Ideas program that was implemented and enhanced Hamilton County's communication with diverse audiences.

In addition, the HRD program that Laura manages enables all County employees to participate in the sharing of ideas and best practices that can lead to innovation.

Professional Achievement Award: Annette Meagher Hamilton County Soil & Water Conservation District

Annette Meagher, Public Relations Specialist for Hamilton County's Soil & Water Conservation District (SWCD), organized an event that enabled hundreds of residents to do something great for the environment.

Annette saw a need for a better way for residents to dispose of unwanted or unneeded medication. Doctors and pharmacists routinely recommend flushing unused medication, yet pharmaceutical drugs are showing an ever increasing presence in streams. To keep these drugs out of our water, Annette organized a group called the Southwest Ohio Dispose Responsibly of Pharmaceuticals (DROP). This group consists of local health, safety, and environmental professionals. Annette met with area police chiefs and firefighter chiefs to recruit their assistance with the collection.



The DROP collaboration organized 22 drop-off sites throughout Clermont, Hamilton and Warren County. It involved over 120 volunteers, 70 police officers and firefighters, and over 50 residents. During the four-hour event, over 2,000 pounds of medication were collected. State Representative Louis Blessing took note of this event and contacted the SWCD for more information. He wants to propose a bill to set up permanent collection sites at all police stations. Annette's good work continues! This year, she is launching an effort to work with hospitals on recycling and proper disposal of medications.



Scenes from the May 5 Greater Cincinnati Public Service Recognition Event

Proclamation Hamilton County Board of Commissioners

PROCLAMATION IN RECOGNITION OF PUBLIC SERVICE RECOGNITION WEEK 2011 IN HAMILTON COUNTY MAY 3RD TO MAY 9TH

WHEREAS, the Greater Cincinnati Public Service Recognition Committee will celebrate their 22nd Annual public Service Recognition Week May 2nd to May 8th, 2011 to honor public employees at all levels of government; and

WHEREAS, public employees in Greater Cincinnati consistently make important contributions to their employer and to their community through expertise, their dedication and loyalty to our community; and

WHEREAS, there are more than 12,000 employees for various county, state and federal government agencies who live, work and raise a family in Hamilton County, Ohio.


NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED, that the gratitude of the Hamilton County Board of Commissioners be expressed to all public employees for their service by designating May 2nd through May 8th as:

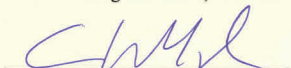
Public Service Recognition Week


in Hamilton County, Ohio.

BY ORDER OF THE
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS
HAMILTON COUNTY, OHIO




Greg Hartmann, President


Chris Monzel


Todd Portune

printed on recycled paper





Caring Families are Needed!



Raja

Raja likes to keep busy and enjoys sports — basketball in particular. She would benefit from a family who loves sports and would support her activities by attending her games. Raja is very outspoken and has no difficulty expressing her feelings. A family who allows her to express herself, but also develops clear boundaries, would be a great fit for Raja.

To learn more about Raja and others available for adoption, please call 513-632-6366 or visit www.hcadopt.org.

JFS Director Moira Weir Speaks to “Leadership Cincinnati” Participants

In April, Job and Family Services Director Moira Weir spoke with participants in the Leadership Cincinnati program. The program, produced by the Cincinnati USA Regional Chamber, provides top level organizational leaders the opportunity to expand their networks with both public and private local leaders. Civic responsibility is a big component of the program.

"As someone charged with leading a diverse group of individuals on a daily basis, I often draw on some of the experiences and knowledge I gained in Leadership Cincinnati," said Weir. "The relationships I built during the course of this program are invaluable to me and are sources I draw on often to help me and the agency I lead."

To learn more about Leadership Cincinnati, please visit [this link](#).



Please post “Hello Hamilton County,” so everyone can see what’s going on!

Hello Hamilton County is published monthly. It is designed to inform citizens and employees about news and events related to Hamilton County government. You can find current and archived editions on the County’s website. If you have questions, suggestions, or article submissions, please contact Laura Maus.

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